



Press Release

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By: Maj. Guy Hayes

National Guard Mongolian partners visit rural Alaska for Arctic Care 2012

NOME, Alaska— Four medical military representatives from Mongolia visited the village of Golovin, Alaska, April 15 to see U.S. military medical professionals provide care to underserved Alaska residents during Arctic Care 2012.

The visit was part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program and provided a unique opportunity for the Mongolian service members to observe Arctic Care in hopes of bringing back knowledge to their country.

Partnered in 2003, Alaska and Mongolia have formed a relationship sharing information through multiple exchanges and exercises. Resembling each other in size and terrain, the partnership benefits both Alaska and Mongolia according to the Alaska-Mongolia State Partnership Program Director, Maj. Wayne Don.

"Arctic Care exposes them to our techniques and procedures and allows them to witness the benefit of an interagency approach," Don said. "Seeing how we execute this mission in a complex, logistically challenging operational environment and having the opportunity to experience rural Alaska is extremely beneficial."

With more than 250 military medical professionals providing care in 16 remote locations, the opportunity for the Mongolians to visit one of these villages and experience how the U.S. military operates and trains is invaluable.

"We are very happy we came to Alaska to participate in Arctic Care 2012," said Maj. Naranzul Tumurbaatar, a physician with the Mongolian Armed Forces. "We really enjoyed visiting Golovin today. It was beneficial because we will take this knowledge home and share it with our Mongolian health care providers."

Travelling on an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, the Mongolian officers also experienced just how remote it can be in western Alaska, a point Don thinks they can relate to in Mongolia.

"The environmental and medical challenges of providing medical services to remote portions of Alaska and Mongolia are similar," Don said. "I think there is a lot to be gained by allowing our partner country to participate and observe in our exercise and share some of the lessons learned with us."

Sponsored by the Innovative Readiness Training program under the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Arctic Care is bringing health care and veterinary support to residents in the Bering Strait and Norton Sound regions of western Alaska from April 9-23.

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Cutlines:

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From left to right: Maj. Naranzul Tumurbaatar, Lt. Col. Elbegjargal Buyantogtokh, Lt. Col. Delgersaikhan Tudev and Lt. Ichinkhorloo Erdene Ochir, all of the Mongolian Armed Forces, stand in front of the health clinic in Golovin, Alaska, April 15. Photo by Maj. Guy Hayes, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs.

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Lt. Col. Rebecca Young (left), nurse practitioner with the Alaska Army National Guard discusses Arctic Care medical operations with Maj. Naranzul Tumurbaatar in Golovin April 15. Photo by Maj. Guy Hayes, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs.

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Mongolian and Arctic Care medical professionals listen to a briefing on veterinarian services being provided in Golovin April 15. Arctic Care veterinarians have conducted surgeries, vaccinations and other general examinations for village pets during Arctic Care 2012. Photo by Maj. Guy Hayes, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs.

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Lt. Ichinkhorloo Erdene Ochir, a dentist with the Mongolian Armed Forces, plays with dogs recently treated by veterinarians in Golovin. Ochir is one of four medical professionals from Mongolia who travelled to Alaska to see operations during Arctic Care 2012. Photo by Maj. Guy Hayes, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs.

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Lt. Col. Elbegjargal Buyantogtokh (left) speaks to Air Force Capt. Alex Kwon, an optometrist from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Buyantogtokh is an optometrist with the Mongolian Armed Forces who travelled to Alaska to see operations during Arctic Care 2012. Photo by Maj. Guy Hayes, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs.

To view a video of the Mongolian visit to Golovin during Operation Arctic Care click here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAw4VwYzr0M&feature=youtu.be> or <http://dvidshub.net/r/7uhag2>